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## REPORT OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1942.

### POPULATION.

The population estimate for the year, based on the census figures of 1931, was 337,000.

### BIRTHS AND DEATHS.

There were only 9,614 births as against 15,050 for the previous year. The number of deaths was 5,428 as against 8,039 in 1941.

### INFANTILE DEATHS.

The number of infantile deaths was 1,114 as against 2,038 for the previous year. The rate per 1,000 births was 166 as against 135 for 1941.

### MATERNAL MORTALITY.

The maternal mortality rate was 12·8 as against 15·1 for the previous year. Corrected for non-residents, the rate was 8·4 as against 11·1 per 1,000 births for the previous year.

### MAJOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

There were no cases of plague, cholera, or smallpox during the year.

### OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Incidence of mumps showed an increase as compared with the figures for the previous year. There were 168 City cases of enteric fever and 185 City cases of dysentery as against 414 and 264 cases, respectively, for the previous year.

### GENERAL SANITATION, &c.

*Fly Nuisance.*—As a result of rather an unprecedented fly nuisance, a special Committee was appointed by the War Council with the Chief Medical Officer of Health as Chairman. A copy of the report submitted was sent to the Council with certain recommendations with regard to possible future nuisances of this type. Action is being taken on the various points raised in that report.

The Committee found that the fly nuisance was caused by rotting foodstuffs in the Harbour premises, which subsequently happened to be dumped in various parts of Colombo without our consent or knowledge, thus starting the fly nuisance in other parts as well. This difficulty was soon got over. Mention might also be made of a special departmental committee appointed to go into the question of the possible introduction of yellow fever into the Island. The recommendations made in that report including the necessary legislation are being considered at present.

*Cafés.*—Many cafés started to spring up during the course of the year owing to food difficulties and resulted in a great deal of work involving constant inspections of places that were hardly fit to be put into use as cafés. But gradually when the conditions returned to a more or less normal state the majority of the troubles lessened, but still the actual control of these seems to be placed under two authorities, namely, the Public Health Department from the point of view of general sanitation, and the Mayor who is the licensing authority under the Special Regulations.

*Milk Depôts.*—The Civil Defence Commissioner started a series of milk depôts for the convenience of the public. The milk is brought to these depôts from the Government Dairy and also from two other dairies belonging to the Council which are under the control of the Municipal Veterinary Surgeon.

### MUNICIPAL FREE DISPENSARIES.

105,149 patients were treated as against 183,827 during the previous year. The number of visits was 211,272.

RCB/H P

The reports of the Medical Officer, Maternity and Child Welfare, the Special Officer, Chest Diseases, the City Microbiologist, and the City Analyst are annexed.

#### CIVIL DEFENCE.

The Chief Medical Officer of Health was appointed the Officer in charge of the Casualty Service. Nine out of the eleven Dispensaries were put into use as First Aid Posts, the other two not being satisfactory from a point of view of position and size. The Dispensary Medical Officers have in addition to their own duties taken up the duties of the Medical Officers in charge of First Aid Posts.

The Public Health Nurses have been attached as A. R. P. nurses to these various posts and the Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors as additional dressers.

C. H. GUNASEKERA,

April 7, 1943.

Chief Medical Officer of Health.

#### *Annexure A.*

#### REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER, MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE, FOR 1942.

Owing to the adverse conditions that existed from the very beginning of the year our programme of work had to be periodically revised. Following the incidents of April last all our field nurses were requisitioned for A. R. P. duties. A rapid fall in the clinic attendance and in the deliveries, both in the district and in our Maternity Homes, was registered. But this was only for a very short time and long before the year ended our activities had come back to normal.

J. E. D. MENDIS,

March 29, 1943.

Medical Officer, Maternity and Child Welfare.

#### *Annexure B.*

#### REPORT OF THE TUBERCULOSIS SERVICE FOR 1942.

##### CHEST CLINIC SERVICE.

Total number of cases seen ...	571	{	(1) New cases ...	297
			(2) Subsequent visits	274
New cases ...	297	{	(1) Diagnosed as Pulmonary T.B. ...	150
			(2) Diagnosed as Non-tubercular ...	57
			(3) Cases under observation ...	90
Disposal of cases ...	130	{	(1) Males ...	89
(hospitalized)			(2) Females*	41
Contact examinations ...	738	{	(a) Negative ...	576
(with Tuberculin)			(b) Positive ...	162
Diagnostic aid used		{	1. Sputum ...	134
			2. Faeces ...	2
			3. X'Rayst ...	146
Discharged patients ...	65	{	1. Number traced and seen by Health Visitors..	44
			2. Number untraced (or goes outstations) ...	21
			1. Number of visits paid to families (by Health Visitors)	2,940
Care and after-care ...		{	2. Number of visits paid to families (by Special Officer, Chest Diseases)	456
			3. Number of families given relief from T.B. Vote...	65
			4. Total amount spent on relief ...	Rs. 3,163.50

MILANIUS DE ALMEIDA,

March 29, 1943.

Special Officer, Chest Diseases.

\* Females in Waiting List on December 31, 1942 — 8

† Rontgenograms interpreted by Special Officer, Chest Diseases.



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*Annexure C.*

## REPORT OF THE CITY MICROBIOLOGIST FOR 1942.

During the year 1942 the activities of the laboratory were on a somewhat reduced scale owing to the temporary emigration of a part of the population of Colombo. The number of specimens dropped considerably during the months following the raid, but reached the former level again in the second part of the year. Our improved methods of serological tests for typhoid have continued to be appreciated and the number of specimens submitted for this purpose is high. The same can be stated of the serological test for malaria. I notice that medical practitioners and consultant physicians get more and more used to the tests thereby acknowledging their value. The Naval Hospital has adopted our methods and exchanges experiences with us.

The preparation of vaccines was on a larger scale as usual. Large quantities of anti-typhoid vaccine were prepared and issued. Cholera vaccine was prepared and kept in readiness but not issued in large quantities.

The water supply to the City kept up a high standard of purity throughout the year.

As Colombo has been free from *plague* for some time, it seemed to be worth while to try to find out whether *rat-plague* also could be considered as extinct. From our autopsies of rats the conclusion was drawn that there was certainly no epizootic plague among the rat population of Colombo, as, since 1938, no death due to plague infection was detected. Nevertheless, the possibility of a lingering-on enzootic plague of low virulence had to be ruled out, and, for this purpose, systematic examination of rat-fleas for plague infestation was undertaken during the last few months. Since *Erskine* recommended the examination of pooled fleas for the purpose of detecting plague infection of a rodent population, this method has been widely used with better success than tissue examination of rodents themselves whenever a survey of an area was attempted where only a mild enzootic plague could be suspected in the absence of a manifest enzootic plague.

About 1,700 fleas collected from rats caught in the so-called plague areas of Colombo have been examined and were found free of plague. These findings support the presumption that the rodent population of Colombo is free from plague.

*Research Work.*—Research work was mostly concentrated on *typhoid*. In collaboration with some members of the visiting staff of the General Hospital, serological studies were continued and a modified Vi agglutination technique was tried out. The results were satisfactory and the new technique has now become embodied in routine examinations. A paper on the subject was read before the Society of Medical Officers of Health and will be published in the journal of the Society.

The effect of various physical and chemical influence on *B. typhosus* has been studied. Attempts to make use of experience gathered in this connection for prophylactic or therapeutic purposes are still in their early stages.

E. K. WOLFF,

City Microbiologist.

March 15, 1943.

*Annexure D.*

## REPORT OF THE CITY ANALYST FOR 1942.

In the milk trade full advantage was taken of the existing conditions. Milk was difficult to obtain ; the result was the milk obtained was highly adulterated, up to 80 per cent. Only 35 per cent. passed the full standard. 25 per cent. the 1-10 per cent. standard ; 17 per cent. 11-30 per cent ; 22 per cent. + 31 per cent. The maximum varied between 40-80 per cent.

The fat standard was not so badly abused. Maximum deficiency amounted to 52 per cent. varying from 14 per cent. Many of the milks were labelled as cow's milk when they were obviously buffalo milk. 72 per cent. passed the fat standard—12 per cent. fell between 1-10 per cent. ; 13 per cent. between 11-30 per cent. ; and 3 per cent. over 31 per cent.

Coal gas was up to the standard in Ammonia and Sulphuretted Hydrogen.

Sewages showed a 20-33 per cent. improvement from Bellmouth to Effluent at Madampitiya. The Wellawatta Bellmouth Sewage is about as concentrated as Madampitiya Effluent.

ALEXANDER BRUCE,

March 13, 1943.

City Analyst..

*Sample Index, 1942.*

Month.	Town Waters.	Well Waters.	Miscellaneous.	Milk.	Total..
January	... 16	... 2	1 gas	4	23
February	... 16	... 3	1 gas	5	25
March	... 16	... 20	1 gas, 1 Helatuwa water, 5 sewages	8	51
April	... 15	... 21	1 gas, 1 flour	7	45
May	... 14	... 20	1 gas	11	46
June	... 17	... 11	1 gas	31	60
July	... 16	... 3	1 gas, 3 tea	36	59
August	... 16	... 5	1 gas	53	75
September	... 16	... 3	1 gas, 1 kitul jaggery	58	79
October	... 16	—	1 gas, 1 caster oil, 1 curd, 2 noodles	52	73
November	... 16	—	1 gas, 1 gingelly and 1 coconut poonac	23	42
December	... 16	—	1 gas	3	20
Total	... 190	88	29	291	598

